

**STATE OF TENNESSEE  
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH  
VITAL RECORDS  
DEATHS  
1881-1948**

**RECORD GROUP 228**

*by:*

Ted Guillaum  
Scott Simpson, Intern  
Archives & Manuscript Unit  
Technical Services Section

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**MICROFILMED**

## INTRODUCTION

This document is meant to serve as a guide to the original death record documents that are in the possession of the Tennessee State Library and Archives. These records have been microfilmed and are available for public use as Record Group 228. These records begin in 1881 and continue to 1948. This is an open record group and will continue to grow on a yearly basis as records are released from the Bureau of Vital Records. In July of 1998, the original documents were organized by placing them in new acid free boxes with new labels and relocated to one central storage area in the archives in order to facilitate easier access.

Early attempts to keep state death records were tried at various times but the results were not consistent. The state law requiring that death records be kept by the state finally took effect in 1914 and continues today. The Bureau of Vital Statistics maintains closed records for 50 years before they are released for public inspection.

The records begin with County Records from 1881 to 1911. For 1881 there is one volume of Davidson County Births and Deaths from June 1, 1881 through December 30, 1881, and a second volume of Death Records for 48 counties for 1881. The counties included are arranged in the following order: Bedford, Benton, Blount, Campbell, Cannon, Cumberland, Coffee, DeKalb, Dickson, Fayette, Fentress, Gibson, Grundy, Greene, Hardeman, Henderson, Henry, Hardin, Hawkins, Hamblen, Hamilton, Hickman, Johnson, Jackson, Knox, Lauderdale, Lawrence, Lewis, Lincoln, Moore, Macon, Montgomery, Obion, Pickett, Perry, Rutherford, Putnam, Shelby, Sevier, Stewart, Sullivan, Sumner, Sequatchie, Union, Warren, Wayne, Wilson, and White.

For 1900-1913 there are two boxes of Death Records for Davidson County. There are six volumes of Death Records reported by school districts from 1909 to 1911. Book number one for 1909 contains the records from A to K. Book number two contains L to W. Book number one for 1910 contains Anderson to Franklin counties. Books number two and three for 1910 are missing. Book number four, 1910, contains Rutherford to Wilson counties. Book number one for 1911 contains Anderson to Hamblen counties and book number two, 1911, contains Hamilton to Montgomery counties. The books for the remaining counties for 1911 are missing.

The next portion of records are Death Records for Metropolitan Areas (Chattanooga, Knoxville, Nashville) 1874-1923. Records for Chattanooga consist of two bound volumes 1899-1923. Microfilm records for Chattanooga include records beginning in 1872, however, the location of the original documents from 1872 to 1899 is unknown. Records for Knoxville consist of four boxes of records 1883-1913. Records for Nashville begin with a bound volume that contains records for 1874-1880. Then there are nineteen

volumes in eleven boxes that begin with January 1881 and continue through 1913.

The early State Death Records from 1908 to 1912, were kept by clerks in each county. These consist of 10 boxes of records arranged numerically from 1 through 97,776. The law requiring death registration expired in 1913 and no records exist for 1913.

The State Death Records from 1914 through 1925 are arranged in bundles by counties in 84 boxes. They are generally arranged alphabetically by county, however, the arrangement sometimes relates more to the proximity of neighboring counties which disrupts the alphabetical arrangement. The original order of the county bundles was maintained during the reboxing process. Beginning in 1926-1948 the State Death Records are arranged numerically by death record in 35 boxes. At the end of the 1947 records is one box marked "Miscellaneous Deaths." It contains four volumes of documents numbered consecutively from 1-1718, one volume marked "Volume 68, Deaths 1924" with the earliest entry from 1915, one volume numbered consecutively 1-357 and dating from 1915 through 1922, and finally, one volume marked "Volume 61" that is numbered consecutively 1-560 and dating from 1912 through 1920.

## CONTAINER LIST

### DEATH RECORDS: COUNTIES

1881 Davidson County, Births and Deaths, June 1 through Dec. 30

1881 Bedford through Wilson County Record of Deaths

1900-1913 Davidson County, (2 boxes)

1909 Death Records by School Districts, Ending June 30, Volume 1, A-K

1909 Death Records by School Districts, Ending June 30, Volume 2, L-W

1910 Anderson-Franklin, Death Records by School Districts, Ending June 30, Volume 1

1910 Rutherford-Wilson, Death Records by School Districts, Ending June 30, Volume 4

1911 Anderson-Hamblen, Death Records by School Districts, Ending June 30,  
Volume 1

1911 Hamilton-Montgomery, Death Records by School Districts, Ending June 30,  
Volume 2

### DEATH RECORDS: METROPOLITAN AREAS

1874-1880 Nashville, TN, (1 volume, boxed)

1881-1899 (1 box, bound volumes)

Nashville, TN, Jan. 1881-June 1882

Nashville, TN, July 1882-June 1884

Nashville, TN, July 1884-Nov. 1886

Nashville, TN, Dec. 1886-July 1889

Nashville, TN, Aug. 1889-July 1891

Nashville, TN, May 1893-Feb. 1895

Nashville, TN, Mar. 1895-Sept. 1896

Nashville, TN, Oct. 1896-Dec. 1898

Nashville, TN, Jan. 1899-Sept. 1899

1901-1913 (10 boxes, bound volumes)

Nashville, TN, Vol. E, 1901--Vol. H, 1902

Nashville, TN, Vol. I-J, 1902--Vol. K-L, 1903

Nashville, TN, Vol. M, 1903--Vol. N-P, 1904

Nashville, TN, Vol. Q-S, 1905--Vol. T, 1906

Nashville, TN, Vol. U-V, 1906--Vol. W-X, 1907

Nashville, TN, Vol. Y, 1907--Vol. Z & 1, 1908

Nashville, TN, Vol. 2, 1908--Vol. 3-4, 1909

Nashville, TN, Vol. 5, 1909--Vol. 6-8, 1910

Nashville, TN, 1911--April 1912

Nashville, TN, May 1912--1913

1883-1913      Knoxville, TN (4 boxes, bound volumes)

1899-1911      Volume 1, Chattanooga

1911-1923      Volume 2, Chattanooga

#### **DEATH RECORDS: STATE RECORDS**

1908-1912      State Records, Numbers 1-97776 (10 boxes, bound volumes)

1914-1925      State Records, Alphabetical by County (84 boxes, bound volumes)

1926-1948      State Records, Numerical (35 boxes, bound volumes)

1912-1924      "Miscellaneous Deaths" (1 box, bound volumes)